

Contributions

THE COLLEGE SPIRIT AND WHAT IT DOES FOR THE STUDENT

GEORGE C. CARPENTER

We must first know what the college spirit is. We take it that a Christian college is referred to. All colleges ought to be Christian, all ought to have a place for the teaching of God's word, and the inner life of all ought to be permeated by the Christian spirit. From the colleges and universities are coming the world's leaders; and should not those who occupy positions of honor and trust be thoroughly Christian? None would object to that, but some would oppose the teaching of Christ, the nurturing of the spiritual as well as the intellectual nature of the students of American schools and colleges. Why feed the intellect of man and neglect his soul? Why not develop the whole man? The college spirit that will do this may be called a highly intellectual, moral, religious spirit. Intellectual, because it creates or increases a love for truth—scientific, philosophical truth. Moral, because it creates or increases a love for justice, a love for truth manifested in daily life—thoughts, words and actions, and also because it puts a discount on all pretense and on all evil habits. Religious, because gradually the Christ spirit gains more control over the tender religious chords that vibrate more or less in every soul.

Not until there is fully awakened a love for truth, a deep-seated desire for knowledge, is the student able to accomplish much. Not until he has the working spirit (and the college spirit is a working one) not until then will he be in a condition to make rapid and marked progress. In nearly every student there is a longing to know the truth. But this longing must be fostered; for it is this that leads the student onward and inspires him to search out all possible causes. An ancient Greek poet wrote these words,—

"The sages say, Dame Truth delights to dwell,
Strange mansion, in the bottom of a well.
Questions are then, the windlass and the rope
That pull the grave old gentlewoman up.

This intense love of truth is the only windlass and rope that will reach down into the well where Dame Truth delights to dwell, whether she be intellectual, moral or religious truth.

As soon as the student begins to dwell in the college atmosphere, the curtain begins slowly to fall from before his eyes and he begins to see more and more clearly what life is and what it means. In other words his view of life is broadening and will continue to broaden as long as he truly lives. By coming into contact with those men whose thoughts of life reach far beyond the horizon, with those men who look upon man as their brother,—regardless of race, religion or civilization, with those men who have within the Christ spirit, the narrow view of the student soon begins to broaden, his character begins to be transformed, and life itself has a new value. The student learns the true

meaning of life and liberty, he sees the significance of the individual, the grandeur of duty and the power of character.

Great men, as well as great nations have not been boasters and buffoons, but as Emerson says, "They have been perceivers of the terrors of life, and have manned themselves to face it." Life looms up as a reality not to be trifled with. And it is true that no picture of life can have any veracity that does not admit the odious facts. He who sees ahead only flowery beds of ease, peace and plenty, destiny and birth star, is dwelling on a low plane and on a dangerous one. Hope and ambition and enterprise are sparkling gems in their places, but a broad view of life, the true knowledge of men is the decisive gem in the center. This largely enables man to convert impediments into instruments, all enemies into power.

And yet less significant is the moral and spiritual culture gained by the student. Life with many, rich and sacred as it really is, seems very cheap. Our natures are left to develop in any way. But as life in reality begins to dawn upon the student (and it does from day to day) he becomes attentive to its moral sensations, and to what is of more value—that spiritual drawing toward what is good and great. Indeed, the college spirit is a transforming spirit. As we said before, its realms of power are in the intellectual, moral, and spiritual worlds. It takes the common sanguine youth with his glittering dreams and says "Be merry and be wise."

In the words of Emerson, "The joy of the spirit indicates its strength." A joyful spiritual nature animates the student to great desires and endeavors. And the greatest need is some noble soul who shall make him do what he can. This is the service of a friend. Such friends we find among the self-sacrificing, inspiring teachers in our college. We say *our* college for our interest ought to be centered in that. Oh the overpowering importance of companionship with the right building spirits. Not for a year, but for life's work we are making preparations. Not for a day but for eternity we are building.

We want to be men and women in the truest sense of those words. And the transforming spirit of the Christian college is a leading factor in that work. To the gentleman and gentlewoman the world looks up. From them the world expects much,—a higher degree of moral sentiment than is found in others, a firmer conscience, an ear to acute notes of right and wrong, and a greater nearness to God. The spirit of our college tends to keep the student's eyes on eternal things. It feeds the intellect that it may grow. It gives a beauty to opinions and actions which nothing else can do. Men are thus developed who are equal to every event, will not face danger for the right, with duty as a guide.

The Bible says, "The fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom," and again, "To

fear God is to hate evil." The college spirit tends to lead the student to that place where he will intensely desire to know his whole duty to God and men. But upon that which savors the least of evil, the college spirit immediately puts a discount. Rather she puts before such an action a glaring danger signal and says to the student, "Fear God and hate evil, do good only, for they that know God cannot but do good."

All these efforts and more which we cannot mention are necessary factors in the building of high and noble character. And nowhere as in the Christian college surrounded by its working spirit can these effects be so well produced. The time has come when it is the privilege of any young man or young woman who wills it, to live under the influence of the college spirit. Would it cost sacrifice? So much the better, for its benefit and value in the end will be multiplied many fold. It gives us pain when we look about, and see so many young people depriving themselves of benefits which are of untold value. It gives us joy to behold throughout our land that marching of young students who are working and climbing upward on the ladder of knowledge. America is proud of them. It is my earnest desire that many more of our young people will avail themselves of the privileges afforded them at Ashland College.

QUALIFICATIONS OF THE DEACON AND HIS DUTIES TO THE CHURCH

A. J. HIXSON

Dr. Strong has said: "There are many who would die for Christ, but in these times, he calls for men willing to live for him. What is needed today is a higher heroism, a nobler, more costly martyrdom—that of the living sacrifice, the sustained resolve, the renewed selfgiving, the daily consecration." The living sacrifice, the spiritual resolve is sadly lacking in too many lives professing Christ today.

The representation of this conference of our beloved brotherhood speaks for itself. Another year is numbered with the past. We come up again to renew our resolves, to compare notes and to discuss topics of interest and to get inspiration for our home work and trials.

To me has been assigned the following subject: "What are the qualifications of the deacon, and his duties to the church." This is an old inquiry, as old almost as the church itself. It dates far back into the past, to that period which was truly characterized by martyrdoms and self sacrifices. Hence, to that period must we go in our research for knowledge in reference to the origin of the deacon's office. From that holy book, the scriptures, we learn in Acts 6, that owing to the rapid progress made in introducing the gospel of Christ by the Apostles, that a kind of congested condition appears, and the demands exceeded the ability of those early teachers. A murmuring arose on account of the neglected. This necessity gave rise to the office with all that